

**Claims**

- 1 A method of providing a pet with a benefit relating to effective assimilation of a lipid or  
5 lipid fraction comprises the steps of administering to the pet, as a part of, or in addition  
to, its regular diet, an edible composition comprising a pancreatic function promoter  
and one or more of a liver function promoter and an intestinal mucosa function-  
promoter.
- 10 2. A method according to claim 1 wherein the pancreatic function-promoter comprises a  
lipase, a gut pH modifier or a pancreatic extract.
3. A method according to claim 1 or claim 2 wherein the liver function-promoter is  
selected from taurine, emulsifiers, vitamins, minerals, glutathione and glutathione  
15 promoters, and combinations thereof.
4. A method according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the intestinal mucosa  
function promoter includes a fat transportation aid, agent or carrier.
- 20 5. A method according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the benefit to the pet  
is related to at least one of gut function, outward appearance, pet-to-owner  
relationship, aging and general health aspects.
- 25 6. A method according to claim 5 wherein the benefit is related to aging, and is  
observable in any one or more of:
  - Delayed onset of signs of aging;
  - Amelioration of an age-related effect;
  - Improved vision;
  - Restored functionality of the digestive system in an aged pet; and
  - 30 - Increased longevity.
7. A method according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the composition is in  
the form of a nutritionally balanced, ready-to-eat meal.
- 35 8. A method according to claim 7 wherein the composition comprises a dried kibble.

9. A method according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the composition is administered as a meal supplement.
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10. A method according to any one of claims 5 to 9 wherein the benefit is related to outward appearance and is observable in any one or more of:
- Improved body condition;
  - Improved muscle tone;
  - 10 - Improved skin and coat condition; and
  - A younger look.
11. A nutrition management regimen for maintaining, improving, promoting or otherwise enhancing lipid digestibility comprises a dietary component for feeding regularly in an effective lipid assimilation-promoting amount, according to predetermined
- 15 directions, to a pet animal, the dietary component comprising a pancreatic function promoter and one or more of a liver function promoter and an intestinal mucosa function-promoter.
- 20 12. A regimen according to claim 11 wherein the pancreatic function-promoter comprises a lipase, a gut pH modifier or a pancreatic extract.
13. A regimen according to claim 12 wherein the gut pH modifier includes one or more of an acidifier, an alkalanizer, a buffer, a prebiotic or a probiotic micro-organism.
- 25 14. A regimen according to any one of claims 11 to 13 wherein the liver function-promoter is selected from taurine, emulsifiers, vitamins, minerals, glutathione and glutathione promoters, and combinations thereof.
- 30 15. A regimen according to any one of claims 11 to 14 wherein the liver function-promoter is a nutrient that increases endogenous glutathione after ingestion.
16. A regimen according to any one of claims 11 to 15 wherein the intestinal mucosa function-promoter includes a fat transportation aid, agent or carrier.
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17. A regimen according to claim 16 wherein the aid, agent or carrier is selected from whey protein and proteases having the capacity to promote the formation of lipoproteins.
- 5 18. A regimen according to claim 16 or 17 wherein the intestinal mucosa function-promoter includes an anti-inflammatory agent, lactoferrin, a prebiotic or a probiotic micro-organism.
- 10 19. A regimen according to claim 18 wherein the anti-inflammatory agent is an omega-3 fatty acid.
20. A regimen according to any one of claims 16 to 19 wherein the fat transportation aid, agent or carrier has a fatty acid profile selected to improve lipid absorption.
- 15 21. A regimen according to claim 20 wherein the fatty acid profile is polyunsaturated.
22. A regimen according to claim 21 wherein the fat transportation aid, agent or carrier comprises whey protein.
- 20 23. A regimen according to any one of claims 11 to 22 wherein the benefit derivable by the pet from effective assimilation of a lipid or lipid fraction is related to at least one of gut function, outward appearance, pet-to-owner relationship, aging and general health aspects.
- 25 24. A regimen according to claim 23 wherein the benefit that is related to gut function is observable in any one or more of:
- Increased nutrient and energy digestibility;
  - Improved gut microflora, such as is observed in decreased small intestine bacterial overgrowth;
  - 30 - Improved fecal consistency and/or odour;
  - Optimized fecal volume;
  - Improved regularity of food transit time;
  - Reduced flatulence;
  - Enhanced gut detoxification; and
  - 35 - Improved absorption of fat-soluble nutrients.

25. A regimen according to claim 23 wherein the benefit that is related to outward appearance is observable in any one or more of:
  - Improved body condition;
  - 5       - Improved muscle tone;
  - Improved skin and coat condition; and
  - A younger look.
- 10   26. An edible composition for use in maintaining, improving, promoting or otherwise enhancing lipid digestibility in a pet animal by regular administration to such animal, according to predetermined directions, the composition comprising a pancreatic function-promoter and at least one of a liver function-promoter and an intestinal mucosa function-promoter.
- 15   27. A method of improving the appearance of a pet animal comprising the step of increasing its capability to digest fat in its diet by feeding the pet a diet that contains a pancreatic function promoter and a liver function promoter, an intestinal mucosa function promoter or a combination thereof.
- 20   28. A method according to claim 27 wherein the pancreatic function promoter comprises a fat emulsifier / emulsification system, the intestinal mucosa function promoter comprises an acidifying agent and intestinal mucosa function promoter comprises a fat transportation agent.

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